

THE FIVE WORLDS: A HISTORY

Part 1: Terran Contacts With The Entomalians And Avarians

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Date:

October 17, 2308 EST

Subject:

Intergalactic Origins of the

Fourth Interstellar Conflict

Source:

Excerpts from the writings of First Admiral Marc Harder

Our repeated contacts by way of trading and warfare with other powers in the past 250 years have taught us a great deal; not only about their military prowess, but how other races have evolved and survived. These sociological and economic factors have had as much to do with an empire's success as their military capabilities. A brief review of the Five Powers evolvement is in order before we take an in-depth study of the current situation.

Much of Old Earth's technology was interrupted and destroyed by the last World War in 1987. While this period remains shrouded in mystery due to the loss of many records, enough data has survived to be able to trace mankind's development through the post-atomic era. The war started among several minor countries in what is now the Mediterranean Cultural and Recreational Center, spread to Africa and Asia and eventually drew the empires of North America, Eurasia, and the European continent into conventional warfare. It remains unclear as to who fired the first thermonuclear missile; but what is clear, is that few people survived its effects.

The survivors from distant parts of the globe were able to contact each other via radio transmissions and acquired surviving transportation to reach some of Earth's few untouched regions. By 1994 the first major resettlement was established in Australia. All mankind cooperated for the first time in our history resulting in a remarkable recovery. By 2041 we had achieved a technical level superior to that enjoyed in 1987 that was in no small part achieved by great strides in energy research and rocket propulsion.

Our technical achievements during the next fifteen years were many but two overshadowed the rest. One was the high speed underground shuttle system that connected every major city on the globe. The second was the orbiting space platforms that converted sunlight to electricity and beamed it down to an energy dependent culture. From these space platforms, shuttles were launched to explore Luna and Mars and establish our first continually manned outposts. Two manned interstellar probes were launched into deep space as our first strides into the heavens. Audio and visual contact with the probes were lost in 2060 when new transmissions overwhelmed their signals.

These transmissions proved to be an Entomalian (Bug) warfleet hunting down Avarian survivors when the Bugs attacked the outer Avarian provinces. One Avarian pilot managed to land his crippled craft on Luna Base where he and his ship attracted a great deal of curiosity and suspicion. The surviving pilot enlightened

us about current intergalactic politics including the capture of one of our probes by the Bugs before the Avarians could rescue them. As it became clear that our people could be in deadly peril, we feverishly built defenses around massive laser and missile installations on Luna Base and a dozen asteroids placed in orbit around Earth.

The Entomalians interpolated the course of our captured probe that entered their battle area but had no available ship to go to the edge of the galaxy to investigate its origin. But the Bugs' memories were long, and on the fateful day July 18, 2063, a lone battlecraft appeared on Luna's long range scanners. It obviously scanned us because it didn't venture within firing range but headed back the way it had come. A week later our sensors picked up the ion trails of over forty starships closing our solar system. The Entomalians swept in, ignoring their losses, and pulverized Luna Base, the outpost asteroids and finally Earth itself. By the time they had finished their destruction our recovery had been set back 70 years.

Our short rebuilding period was due largely to help from the Avarian culture. Most of Earth was now uninhabitable due to radiation levels left over from the 20th Century as well as the residue of the Entomalian massacre. For twenty years we labored to build a new Earth but our most important population centers and manufacturing sites had to be located on Luna and Mars. At the same time our first primitive intergalactic battlefleet was constructed on the nearly weightless environs of Luna. All of mankind's illusions about a peaceful exploration of space and finding benevolent, advanced races had been shattered.

The Avarians

From our explorations during the next century we found that our scientific expectation that planets would evolve creatures able to survive the peculiar atmosphere and climactic conditions of that planet were false. In some cases life existed in spite of those conditions. A case in point was our Avarian benefactors.

Their small, dusty planets have a gravity of 0.89 compared to Earth's 1.0. This varies of course, but the home planets closely follow this formula.

Vegetation is plentiful with many farms to develop the tremendous amounts of protein the Avarian's diet and metabolism require. Much of the planet's surface is cultivated with fast growing grains that must be continuously irrigated because of the lack of surface water. This lack of water on the planet's surface or in shallow underground reservoirs ruins our long held evolutionary theory that life must evolve in a water environment. Even the Avarians are unable to explain with any scientific certainty how their ancestors survived the rigors of their planets.

Cities are usually built high and are spaced far apart to allow the maximum land area to be devoted to agriculture and protein farms. The architecture is simple in detail but complicated in design and form. Thin spires rising hundreds of meters into the atmosphere support their graceful cities as the legs support the weaving body of a spider. The flow and sweep of their building lines have few flat panels to mar the sculptured effect of these trade centers.

The Avarians are somewhat shorter than we are with a light, hollow bone structure. Internal organs are similar to ours with the exceptions of a duplicate liver, minor heart system and an organ of unknown function placed anteriorly to the pancreas. Their fast metabolism gives them only a marginally reduced

lifespan compared to ours because their advanced medical technology has been able to compensate for the rapid degeneration typical of a species with a high metabolic rate.

The Entomalians

Entomalian lifestyles are the most structured in the galaxy. Three classes of individuals exist on their jungle planets. The Office of Galactic Intelligence (OGI) has classified 76% of the population as workers, 3% as the ruling or managerial class (code named drones) and the remaining 21% are performing military duties. Their society is strongly influenced by the military; a continuous state of war with someone is their way of life. Living quarters and 40% of the manufacturing sites are buried deep underground. The principal energy processing centers are located on the surface, along with extensive agricultural sites. All large animals (principally mammalian!) have been ruthlessly exterminated which caused such an ecological imbalance that many of the Entomalian agricultural areas suffered from an unchecked small pest population (actually a related species of the Entomalians). This caused a timely decrease in the Entomalian population that helped save the Avarians and ourselves shortly after our first contact with them in 2063. They have fully recovered now, but are in a state of technical obsolescence particularly with our introduction of the Star Base REVENGE (the newest Terran weapon, REVENGE is a mobile killer satellite capable of destroying whole planets).

The Entomalian chitinous exoskeleton serves as body armor but is not as protective as our armored infantries form-fitted plate. Their internal organs are bathed in a green mucoprotein solution that oxygenates the body's cells. Oxygen transfer takes place through pores in the thorax making them susceptible to suffocation when operating in a smokey, gaseous or liquid atmosphere. With four arms to bear weapons, plus their large numbers of soldiers, a fusillade of concentrated firepower can be directed against any target. They tend to be a little slower afoot than we, but utilization of underground trams in their tunnel complexes has caught our troops by surprise on more than one occasion.

Usually stymied by well protected sites, they try to encircle the site to isolate it and capture it later. This nullifies fortress type defenses but isn't effective against a MAATAC Corps. The workers and drones have not proven to be a challenge to our Interstellar Assault Corps (ISAC) but the soldiers will fight to the last. They have no regard for casualties because their losses can easily be recovered in their breeding chambers. The blood feud between the Entomalians and Avarians has existed for about four centuries. The hard working Avarians found that their meager existence carved out of their barren planets was imperiled by the Entomalian desire to secure new agricultural centers. The distance between the major planets of these two races, and the technical superiority of the Avarians, have kept the tremendous masses of Bugs at bay until recently. The Avarian nation is reduced compared to what it once was but we have resolved to relieve some of the Entomalian pressure from their beleaguered fleet. This comes at a time when we are not bound by treaty but by our gratitude.

Our treaty with the Avarians ended when we became involved in the Carnivore-Aquarian dispute. The Avarians have been friendly with both nations and were politically embarrassed when we chose sides. We have found it difficult to support Carnivore claims on border systems because they have attempted seizure of some of our colonial planets and pirated defenseless merchant ships. The Entomalian sham of negotiations was broken when we revealed the existence of the REVENGE. The Bug's delegation has returned home leaving our military to ponder the possibility of another extended campaign.